

General Index to Volume 237

January-December 1989

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Need to be privatised

Addressing the annual luncheon of the Colliery Guardian 1989 Students' Prize Competition, Mr Trevor Massey, Head of Technical Department of British Coal, said "the industry must learn to manage on costs not just on production and on cash which is more important. For this the industry needs to be privatised". He then expressed the wish that magazines like Colliery Guardian would support these hopes.

Earlier, Mr Massey had congratulated the winning students on their technical achievements and thanked Mr Roy Greenslade, Managing Director of International Business & Technical Magazines Ltd, publishers of Colliery Guardian, for the continued support of this very worthwhile competition and for the excellent luncheon, held this time in the appropriate setting of the wine cellar of the Cafe Royal in London. The candle-lit occasion was not interrupted by one of the biggest power failures in the West End this year.

"Prizes were important" continued Mr

Massey "because they showed the students understood their subject. Most prize winning papers described events leading up to the coalface, development work, salvage, transport etc but not those at the actual coalface. Compared with countries like Australia and the USA where they were starting with highly skilled people, we in this country had to train in basics. However, despite what people say, the good times will never be as good but the bad times will not be as bad. It will be a big industry with a great future. Gaps were appearing as people left the industry but this presented up-and-coming students with great opportunities. The long-wall mining system, developed in Europe, is being copied worldwide, presenting opportunities for keeping improvements going.

"In recent weeks the truth about nuclear power has been revealed. The costs of such power generation are high although at the start they were forecast as being cheaper than coal: nuclear power has proved to have



"We must be privatised" — Massey

great technical complexities. We now need another 10Mt of coal and whilst we must learn to mine with retreat faces we must master the art of development work and salvage operations."

In expressing confidence for the future of the industry Mr Massey advised the winning students to look around more and observe new developments.

